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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR

REPORT

25X1

SUBJECT Soviet Reception and Jamming of VOA Broadcasts

DATE DISTR. 2 June 1954

NO. OF PAGES 4

25X1 DATE OF INFO.

REQUIREMENT

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REFERENCES

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1. In the USSR, the responsibility for creating interference in the ether which hinders free listening to the broadcasts of the Voice of America and the BBC lies with special military units of the Soviet Army Signal Troops, which are equipped with special jamming transmitters. This type of transmitter was designed in 1946 on the orders of the Soviet Government. In 1947-48, the radio engineer who worked on the designs of this transmitter received a Stalin First Prize and continues, with a group of radio engineers, to work on the improvement of the drawings of this transmitter, trying to achieve, as far as possible, complete elimination of audibility of VOA programs. The invention of a jamming transmitter was considered a great technical achievement by the Government.
2. Soviet jamming is under the direct policy control of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. However, the administrative control and operation of the jamming transmitters is under the Ministry of Defense because the jamming devices are operated by signal units of the Ministry.

- 25X1 3. [redacted] Sakhalin Island has several jamming radio transmitters, located in the northern and southern areas of Sakhalin. The type of work done by these radio stations is kept secret [redacted]

25X1

4. The military radio operators working at these stations complain of the very heavy work load and also of the strict regime established for these radio stations. Every technical error which would cause an insufficient jamming of the audibility of the broadcasts of the Voice of America for the Far East is punished by strict disciplinary penalties. A delay in starting the transmitter or its breakdown during the time of the Voice of America's broadcast are considered as events of extreme importance and in individual cases are investigated by legal processes. These units have attached to them operative representatives of the First Chief Directorate of the MVD, USSR, who are observing these units for the agency.

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SECRET

25X1

-2-

- 25X1 5. [redacted] some types of tubes in the transmitter, especially those made with mercury (they are of a large size and expensive), function for a very short period, and often, because of the poor quality, break down prematurely. This usually happens when the radio station is overloaded. The stations are forced to work under an overload, because they do not possess sufficient power to silence completely the broadcasts of the Voice of America. The radio stations are consequently experiencing constant shortages of these tubes.
6. The Soviet Government is forced to spend enormous sums of money for the upkeep of these radio stations, considering the great number of such stations spread over the territory of the Soviet Union and the satellite countries, and the number of people working in them.
7. The Soviet Government attaches great importance to the broadcasts of the Voice of America, and utilizes all the means at its disposal for the isolation of the population of the Soviet Union from objective truthful information, which often nonplusses Soviet propaganda and counteracts its effectiveness to a not inconsiderable degree. News of the numerous flights of Soviet citizens to the West makes an impression on the Soviet listeners, as such news is never published in the Soviet press. Objective reports on the latest international developments, correct estimates of conditions inside the Soviet Union and satellite countries and a comparison of such conditions with life in free countries, discussion of literature, art, music, and other topics, etc, all represent the spiritual material which the Soviet people lack and makes them think. This is what the Soviet State leaders fear most of all.
8. It is noteworthy that the publications of Soviet propaganda pay scant attention to the Voice of America, probably so as not to attract more public attention to these broadcasts.
9. Notwithstanding the obstacles created by the Soviet Government, the population continues to be very much interested in the Voice of America. Acting on the principle that "forbidden fruits are sweet", many individuals having short wave receivers listen attentively to the broadcasts of the Voice of America when circumstances and conditions permit. As a rule, individuals try to do so when they are either alone or among persons they trust, since they are afraid of consequences, knowing that people who display this sort of curiosity are being watched by the organs of State security.
10. It is characteristic that interest in the broadcasts of the Voice of America is apparent not only among the people who are critical of the Soviet rule, but that this interest has infected many government employees "devoted to the cause" and holding responsible positions.
11. The Soviet system has taught the Soviet people not to express their feelings and opinions openly; but sometimes, among intimate friends, people frankly express agreement with the broadcasts of the Voice of America, while in the presence of outsiders they prefer to repeat standard formulas demonstrating their outward patriotism and talk about the "lying propaganda of Wall Street", thinking the exact opposite.
12. The broadcasts of the Voice of America are given much attention by the organs of State security. Regular listeners of the Voice of America broadcasts, especially those who repeat what they hear, are under surveillance by the operational section.

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

-3-

13. The effectiveness of the jamming radio stations has increased considerably as compared with 1947-1948. The audibility of the broadcasts of the Voice of America in the centrally located cities (Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Yaroslavl, Khabarovsk, and Vladivostok) has lately become much worse. This can be chiefly explained by the increase in the number of jamming radio stations and their power in the area of large centers of population, mostly in the area of Moscow-Leningrad. Broadcasts can be better heard in the neighborhood of Moscow and in the rural areas. The best time for listening to broadcasts in the European as well as in the Far Eastern areas of the Soviet Union are the evening and especially the night hours. Much depends on the selectivity and power of the receiving set. Audibility is considerably improved by band-spread tuning in the receiving sets.

14. [redacted] 25X1

25X1 [redacted] as of 1972 [redacted] it had become more difficult to receive
the broadcasts of the Voice of America [redacted]

25X1 [redacted] 25X1

25X1 amateur radiomen [redacted] are using a simple
apparatus to separate the Voice of America from the jamming stations;
this apparatus is attached to the receiving set and has an adjustable
condenser. This apparatus somewhat improves the reception.

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[redacted] leading
workers of governmental ministries listen [redacted] the Voice of America
broadcasts during the night, turning the radio off or switching to
another station when somebody came in. This period is also suitable
for intellectual workers, who usually stay up late, and for persons
of various professions and of higher education who are regular listeners
to the Voice of America. They listen at night because it is a good
time for reception (less interference), and because of living
conditions and safety.

25X1 19.

SECRET

